

Washington, DC – Wednesday, Harry Teague announced that over \$350,000 has been awarded to six of southern New Mexico's tribes to support job training and placement services in the community. The funding, allocated by the Department of Labor (DOL) through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Indian and Native American Program, will help to develop job skills and provide employment placement services for the Pueblos of Acoma, Isleta, Laguna, and Zuni, as well as the Mescalero Apache Tribe, and the Navajo Nation Chapters of Alamo and Ramah.

"In these economic times, it is critical that we work to combat unemployment in our Native American communities, where many tribes face unemployment rates over 50 percent. By investing in workforce training and placement, we can continue to put New Mexican's back to work and develop our local economy," said Harry Teague, whose district includes the Pueblos of Acoma, Isleta, Laguna, and Zuni, as well as the Mescalero Apache Tribe, and the Navajo Nation Chapters of Alamo, Ramah, and To'hajiilee. "The training and services offered by this program will help to secure successful futures for not just the participants, but their entire community."

The majority of the grant will be distributed through the Comprehensive Service Program for Adults, which provides employment and training services for unemployed, underemployed or low-income Indian and Native Americans beginning at age 14. The remaining funding is allocated through the Supplemental Services Program for Youth, which will offer summer and year-round employment and training activities for youths between the ages of 14 and 21. This program provides employment and training services to at-risk youths facing substantial employment barriers. Those selected for the program, including high school dropouts and young resident in need of skills training, can receive job placement assistance, work experience, and occupational skills training.

The announcement, part of \$67 million awarded to 256 organizations today by the Department of Labor, was met with enthusiasm from Native American community leaders.

“The funding received from this grant will greatly benefit the Alamo community. The grant will help employ Alamo youth and allow them to gain more education in the areas of math, reading, and science while also providing them with job readiness skills that will benefit them in the future,” said Alamo Chapter Vice President Annabell Pino. “The jobs provided to the youth will also allow for Alamo youth to gain some income to help pay for school supplies for the next school year. It is a great opportunity for our Alamo Community.”

“This grant will do a lot for our community, where the unemployment rate is 65 percent. The training offered through the program will expose our Zuni youth to a wide range of careers and help to provide much needed income to participants and their families,” said Zuni Lt. Governor Dancy Simplicio.

**The breakdown of funds by entity is as follows:**

Alamo Navajo School Board - \$49,636

Mescalero Apache Tribe - \$61,709

Pueblo of Acoma - \$30,855

Pueblo of Isleta - \$11,805

Pueblo of Laguna - \$37,563

Pueblo of Zuni - \$130,126

Ramah Navajo School Board - \$30,855

Total - \$352,549

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